

Claims

1. Use of propionic bacteria belonging to strains which are not very autolytic and selected for their ability to produce at least 2 g/l of propionic acid and/or of propionates and preferably, more than 4 g/l of propionic acid and/or of propionates after having been cultivated at 30°C in YEL medium containing approximately 11.4 g/l of lactate for 2 to 3 days, then diluted to 1/10<sup>th</sup> in a YEL medium with 0.5% bovine bile added, incubated at 37°C for 90 minutes, centrifuged, taken up in YEL medium and put back to incubate at 37°C for 24 hours, in order to obtain a current food composition or a dietetic or medicinal composition which is absorbable by a human or an animal, prepared so that the bacteria are protected at least partially against gastric acidity, containing at least 10<sup>6</sup> cells/gram of these bacteria, capable of stimulating and increasing significantly the synthesis of propionic acid and/or of propionate and, as the case may be, of acetic acid and/or of acetate at the colon by anaerobic bacterial fermentation.
2. Use as claimed in Claim 1 in order to obtain a composition capable of favouring the assimilation of the principal minerals, in particular calcium and/or iron and/or zinc and/or magnesium at the colon.
3. Use as claimed in any Claim 1, for obtaining a composition having antifungal properties at the colon and, in particular, capable of reducing the development there of pathogenic mycodermis of the candida/thrush type.
4. Use as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, characterised in that the propionic bacteria belong to strains having properties of adhesion on the colonocytes.
5. Use as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 4, characterised in that the composition consists of a dry or hydrated preparation presented in the form of individual fractions of approximately 100 mg to 1 g, preferably from 200 to 500 mg, preferably containing at least 10<sup>8</sup> cells.

6. Use as claimed in Claim 5, characterised in that the composition is presented in the form of gastroresistant capsules.
7. Use as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6, characterised in that the composition consists of a formulated preparation, the propionic bacteria being added to or associated with a fermentable substrate, notably dietary fibres.
8. Use as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6, characterised in that the composition consists of a formulated preparation, the propionic bacteria being added to or incorporated into liquid, paste or solid foods.
9. Use as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 7, characterised in that the composition contains lactic bacteria and/or bifid bacteria.